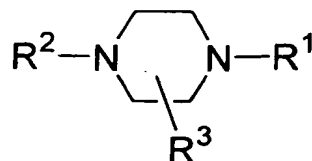


ABSTRACT

A novel process for preparing a compound of the formula I:



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wherein

R¹ denotes substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, alkoxy, aryl, aryloxy or arylalkoxy; R² denotes substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, alkoxy, aryl, aryloxy, arylalkoxy, tosyl, formyl, acetyl or amine; and R³ denotes substituted or unsubstituted alkyl, alkoxy, aryl, aryloxy or arylalkoxy is disclosed. These compounds are useful in the synthesis of the antidepressant mirtazapine and other tetracyclic compounds.

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